

Leaders send holiday message

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WASHINGTON (AFPN) – July 4, 1776, marked an extraordinary turning point in history. The Declaration of Independence adopted by the Continental Congress was, and still is, a revolutionary step in governance. It focused on the good of the individual as well as the good of society. More than 225 years later, those revolutionary ideas continue to flourish on this globe.

The American Revolution was based on the Founding Fathers' vision of liberty – one in which they placed all their trust and their very lives. Their courage has inspired countless Americans to serve our country in public life and the armed services to build this great nation. We owe a debt to all those who have gone before us for their sacrifices for our freedom.

To each and every military member and civilian on duty around the world, we salute you. We are proud to serve with you, as together we protect and preserve the extraordinary freedoms won by those who have gone before us.

Do you know your Fourth of July and Declaration of Independence facts?

□ How did the 13 colonies vote on the Declaration of Independence?

Nine voted yes; two, no; one, undecided; one abstained

□ How many words are in the main text of the Declaration of Independence?

1,332

□ The primary author of the Declaration of Independence was whom?

Thomas Jefferson. Other members of the committee charged with writing the Declaration of Independence were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston

□ Where was the first public reading of the Declaration?

Philadelphia's Independence Square (July 8, 1776)

□ What two former presidents died July 4, 1826?

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams

□ Where was the Declaration of Independence stored during World War II?

In the bullion depository at Fort Knox, Ky.

□ The Declaration of Independence influenced what two other declarations of independence?

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted by the National Assembly of France in 1789, during the French Revolution, as well as Ho Chi Minh's Declaration of Independence for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

□ How many people wait in line every day at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., to view the Declaration of Independence?

Between 5,000-6,000 people

□ When did we start celebrating Independence Day with parades and fireworks?

In the early 1800s

□ What year did the Fourth of July become a legal holiday?

1941

□ The British monarch at the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence was whom?

King George III

Information courtesy of the American Forces Information Service, The History Channel and local research

Safely using fireworks this 4th of July

Every year in the United States, fireworks cause about 12,000 injuries requiring hospital treatment. With this in mind, it's probably a good idea not to bring those fiery devices home at all.

But for those who do choose to have a fireworks display in the backyards of their off-base housing, wear safety goggles. Don't allow small children around fireworks and closely supervise the older children, as recommended by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Are fireworks dangerous?

According to IntelliHealth officials, young people are at the greatest risk to getting injured by fireworks. Nearly 60 percent of fireworks injuries were to people under age 20. The most representative group was age 10 to 14, more boys than girls were.

What are the most common injuries?

A study of 177 fireworks injury cases was conducted in Indiana. Seventy-two percent of the injuries were burn injuries, 11 percent were lacerations and 9 percent were abrasions. The most common injuries were hand and fingers, accounting for 34 percent. Eye injuries were 17 percent, of which one-third resulted in blindness, and face injuries were 12 percent. For children 5 years old and younger, 54 percent of injuries were caused by sparklers, followed by injuries from firecrackers and bottle rockets.

Does firecracker noise pose a problem?

Firecrackers can cause hearing loss. A variety of firecrackers were tested and, at a distance of a little more than two feet, they each produced a noise that was between 130 and 190 decibels; 130 is the noise level that starts to cause damage to the adult ear.

Why do parents give children fireworks?

Parents usually don't believe there's much danger in fireworks. More than 50 percent of the minors injured by fireworks are under adult supervision at the time.

Experts: tips prevent fireworks mishaps

The Fourth of July and fireworks are a natural pair. However, each year many children suffer from burns, loss of eyesight, fingers and hands. Fatalities are also a common occurrence.

Read the directions and follow precautions when handling fireworks.

Although the design of fireworks has been greatly improved in the past several years, there remains the problem of them being explosive and flammable.

Remember that the use of fireworks on Malmstrom is prohibited except when authorized by the 341st Support Group commander.

To help people celebrate safely this Fourth of July, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the national Council on Fireworks Safety offer the following safety tips:

- Always read and follow label directions before firing on any fireworks
- Always have an adult present to supervise
- Use fireworks outdoors only
- Always have water



Many parents think young children around 4 and 5 years old can't handle fireworks, but those who are a little older will be fine with them.

Most fireworks are dangerous in ways most children and adults aren't even aware of. For instance, sparklers can reach 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit. This can certainly cause burns. What's ironic is that throughout the rest of the year parents keep children away from fires and hot surfaces, but when the Fourth of July comes, they light a 1,200-degree torch and hand it over.

What are the other fireworks risks?

The possibility of starting fires is certainly a risk. Fireworks on the Fourth of July cause more fires around the United States than all other fire causes combined. If anyone is planning to set off fireworks, he should wear tighter clothing so sleeves aren't dangling down and catching fire.

Are there sensible guidelines?

It's recommended not having a home fireworks show. Instead, go to a public fireworks display. The public displays are set off by trained professionals and are in compliance with the fire code.

(Editor's note: IntelliHealth provides these fireworks questions and answers at www.intelihealth.com. Courtesy of the Malmstrom Fire Department and 341st Space Wing Safety Office.)

hand (a garden hose and bucket will suffice)

- Never experiment or make your own fireworks
- Light only one firework at a time
- Never re-light a "dud" firework. They might unexpectedly ignite. Wait 15 to 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water
- Never give fireworks to small children
- If necessary, store fireworks in a cool, dry place
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in a trash can
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket
- Never shoot fireworks from metal or glass containers
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the fireworks
- Stay away from illegal explosives.

(Editor's note – these fireworks safety tips are provided by the National Council on Fireworks Safety at www.fireworks-safety.com.)

REMINDER
Fireworks are prohibited
on Malmstrom Air Force Base